The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Seventh report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2015/518)

Fourth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2169 (2014) (S/2015/530)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/518, which contains the seventh report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013). I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/530, which contains the fourth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2169 (2014).

I now give the floor to Mr. Kubiš.

Mr. Kubiš: During my first briefing to the Council (see S/PV.7443), last May, I conveyed my initial impressions as mixed but cautiously positive. Two months later, my initial impressions remain valid, although I increasingly appreciate the scope, depth and complexity of the problems and challenges.

Since last summer's onslaught by terrorists of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Iraq has been living through one of the most difficult phases in its modern history. While the problems may seem daunting and persistent, there is hope, and there are opportunities and, notably, a vision for the way out of the crisis, as expressed in the national political agreement. The real issue is its implementation.

Iraq's political process is moving forward, but without the needed vigour. The Government has achieved many successes and deserves our acknowledgement and support. Prime Minister Al Abadi is seeking actively to fulfil the promises of the Government's programme, but has not always met with success. The political forces that have backed the Government and its programme often cooperate reluctantly, as if the existential threat posed by ISIL and the economic and social difficulties were already a thing of the past. The unity behind the creation of the current Government has not yet fully been translated into unity of purpose or action.

There are signs of a growing understanding, though, that the time has come for comprehensive political agreements, particularly for, as some leaders have described it, a historic national reconciliation. Several plans and blueprints have emerged recently, promoted by key leaders and political forces. Also, the national reconciliation commission has developed an action plan, an initiative owned and led by the Government. The so-called Baghdad document is currently being widely consulted and will benefit from inputs from all Iraqi components, allowing for further ownership of and inclusion in the process. This could provide a starting point for further consultations, including with different opposition groups. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) supports these processes.

This development is most welcome, although political compromises are urgently needed to accelerate the implementation of the national political agreement and ministerial programme. In this regard, institutional and legislative reforms remain key to preserving Iraq's unity, encouraging political reconciliation and defeating ISIL. Regrettably, the absence of consensus has halted the reform process. The national reconciliation legislative package, which includes key bills such as the national guard, the general amnesty and the justice and accountability laws, has seen limited progress since my previous briefing to the Council. All three bills are currently before the Council of Representatives, but progress has been stalled due to lack of trust between Iraqi communities and the absence of the necessary political will. I have informed my interlocutors in Parliament and in the Government that painful compromises are needed to ensure that these bills are passed instead of being returned to the Council of Ministers. Iraq and its people do not have the luxury of time.

Effective partnership between Baghdad and Erbil is equally critical to Iraq's unity and stability in fighting ISIL. In the recent period, the two sides have increasingly expressed disappointment with the implementation of the oil and revenue-sharing agreement signed last year. The period was also marked by the taking of some unilateral steps that work against the interests of both sides and the country as a whole. Both sides urgently need to renegotiate the deal and reach a truly sustainable and comprehensive agreement. UNAMI supports any option that will provide for such sustainability, reinforce confidence and partnership among the two sides, and keep them united in fighting ISIL.

One year after the fall of Mosul, a third of Iraq remains under the control and governance of ISIL. In the reporting period, the military offensives of the Iraqi security forces, with the critical support of the popular mobilization forces, tribal Sunni volunteers and the international coalition, have yet to significantly change the situation on the ground. Tikrit was liberated in March, but Ramadi fell in May. The Government's ongoing offensive in Anbar aims to reverse this setback.

The human cost of the conflict remains far too high. Since I last briefed the Council, UNAMI recorded a minimum of 1,200 civilians killed and more than 2,000 wounded as a result of armed conflict or terror attacks. UNAMI continues to receive widespread reports of attacks targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure, extrajudicial killings, abductions, rape and other forms of sexual violence, forced recruitment of children, wanton destruction and looting of civilian property, and denial of fundamental rights and freedoms. Minorities, women and children continue to be particularly vulnerable to the horrors and indignities inflicted by ISIL. The recent terrorist outrage during the Eid holidays near a Shiite mosque in Khan Bani Saad, in which over 120 civilians were reported killed and some 170 injured, bears further witness to this tragic fact.

Iraq is a mosaic of different ethnic and religious communities. Each component of the Iraqi people has suffered from a range of violations and abuses perpetrated at various times over recent decades. These violations and abuses have undermined trust among communities and eroded national identity. Exacerbating this sense of injustice are actions taken in the current phase of the conflict by ISIL and by some armed groups fighting against it, which aim at or result in forced demographic changes and the targeting of communities considered to be undesirable.

To restore trust and to rebuild unity among the various communities that form the Iraqi people, it is necessary to ensure justice and accountability for violations and abuses, whenever they have taken place and by whomever they were perpetrated, and to eliminate discrimination and marginalization wherever it occurs. Taking action to ensure the protection of diverse ethnic and religious minority communities and their full and equal participation in the economic, social and political life of Iraq will be challenging, but such action is required of the Government if the future cohesion of Iraq is to be assured.

The humanitarian situation is of the gravest concern. At least 8.2 million, roughly one in four Iraqis, need urgent assistance, and half of them need food assistance. More than 3 million people are internally displaced, and partners estimate that nearly 1 million more are likely to be displaced by continuing conflict and violence in the months ahead. Close to 300,000 refugees, mostly from Syria, have sought safety in the country. The Government is continuing to lead the operation, providing resources for cash stipends, distributing assistance and helping to erect camps for populations fleeing violence. Humanitarian partners are working around the clock to provide assistance, but funds are running short. Close to 80 health facilities will be closing in the weeks ahead unless support is received. Food rations have already been cut and scores of life-saving programmes are scheduled to shut down.

The implications of this situation are enormous and profoundly worrying. I thank the donor community for its pledges in response to the recent humanitarian response plan launched in cooperation with the European Union in Brussels on 4 June, but I urge the international community to do more to help desperately vulnerable Iraqi communities. We are very worried by reports that communities and families are being forced to look to ISIL for life-saving assistance, even as United Nations-sponsored programmes are closing for lack of funding.

At the same time, internally displaced persons (IDPs) in increasing numbers are starting to return to liberated areas. The stabilization efforts led by the Government with the support of the United Nations family using the United Nations Development Programme Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization are commendable,

but much more remains to be done to ensure that returns are voluntary, sustainable and dignified and that conditions are in place for people to be able to go out once they return to their homes. We are encouraging the Government to take all the necessary steps to guarantee their safety by exerting further pressure on armed elements temporarily controlling liberated areas in order to prevent occasional revenge attacks and other violations committed against IDPs and establish effective local control over security.

Permit me now to turn to the seventh report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2015/518), on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-party persons and property. Iraq-Kuwait relations are on the ascendant. Iraqi leaders and the United Nations have noted with gratitude the generous donation of $200 million for the needs of IDPs. There is much goodwill between the two sides, which can only grow if tangible results are achieved on the issue of the missing Kuwaiti persons and property. I intend to visit Kuwait to discuss this matter.

I would now like to turn briefly to the issue of the residents of Camp Hurriya. We need to alleviate Iraq's burden. I urge all countries to consider hosting the Camp's residents or to use their influence in assisting in their relocation.

I have one more reminder to make: on our United Nations national staff member taken hostage. In his report, the Secretary-General urges the Iraqi authorities to redouble efforts to secure his release. I strongly support his appeal. We should remember that 88 days have already elapsed without having received any credible information about our colleague, with no positive resolution of the case.

From the lessons learned over the years from the implementation of UNAMI's mandate and through a consultative process, the Secretary-General has spelled out his recommendations on where emphasis should lie with respect to future UNAMI and United Nations country team mandates and activities. The Council's decision later this month on our mandate will provide clear guidance and establish a refocused political framework for the United Nations, including UNAMI.

With the continued support of the Council, I remain confident that we can and we will work hand in hand with the Government of Iraq, political forces and civil society to achieve results in all areas, while in paraticular increasingly mobilizing regional support and cooperation. At this critical juncture, the Government of Iraq, its leadership and, most of all, Iraqis themselves need continuous and massive support and assistance from the international community.

The President: I thank Mr. Kubiš for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Alhakim (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate New Zealand on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and for all its efforts to ensure transparency in the conduct the Council's work in July. I also thank Malaysia for its similar efforts during its presidency of the Security Council in June. I also welcome the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Mr. Ján Kubiš, head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). I thank him and all his team for all their efforts, particularly in the very difficult circumstances currently facing Iraq.

Iraq attaches great importance to the work of UNAMI. Once again, we reiterate the importance of the key role played by the United Nations in its support to the Government and the people of Iraq, and in its efforts to foster democratic institutions, provide support to refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and promote human rights — including those of young people, children and women — and judicial and legal reforms in the country. We thank them for all that broad-based support.

The Government of Iraq submitted to the Secretary-General and the Security Council a letter calling for an extension of UNAMI's mandate, in line with the wishes of my country that the Mission's mandate be extended until 31 July 2016, on the basis of the principles of resolution 1770 (2007). We believe that it is important for the Mission to continue to provide aid and advice to the Government of Iraq in order to guarantee a dignified life for the families of displaced persons in particular.

As we have in the past, we underscore once again today the need to address terrorism and for international cooperation to achieve that goal. Any procrastination allows terrorist organizations to further infiltrate other countries and regions, and to entrench their presence in those areas where they are already operating. The deplorable and tragic events that have taken place in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, France and elsewhere attest to this. We would therefore like to reiterate once again the importance of promoting

international cooperation and for States to honour their commitments under resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2014), which condemn the activities of Daesh and foreign terrorist fighters, and identify the obligations and commitments of States in combating terrorism and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters and in cutting off the funds available to Daesh, for example through oil funds and trafficking activities.

We therefore welcome the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, adopted by the Council of Europe on 19 May. Our hope is that all the members of the Council of Europe will move swiftly to implement the provisions of the Additional Protocol and that they will duly enact corresponding domestic legislation.

The Daesh attacks on cities and villages in the provinces of Iraq have led to huge internal displacements; more than 2 million Iraqis have had to flee Daesh violence. The Iraqi Government is working hard to meet their needs and to create relevant mechanisms to provide assistance to the victims of Daesh attacks, in particular the displaced and vulnerable persons, such as women, children and members of ethnic and religious minorities. We are also working hard to create the conditions for a safe and secure environment to allow the return of those displaced persons. The Iraqi Council of Ministers has earmarked half a billion dollars for support in meeting the needs of displaced persons. We look forward to providing more according to our ability.

We pay tribute to the role played by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which has been working closely with the Council of Ministers and the Government of Iraq in supporting IDPs and refugees. We are also grateful to the agencies that have been working hard to ensure that humanitarian aid is supplied to those in dire need.

We call on Member States to support the humanitarian response plan for Iraq and to work with the Government of Iraq to provide the necessary assistance to victims who have endured the terrorist scourge. We welcome the efforts of Member States and their contributions to supporting humanitarian efforts in Iraq thus far, which we hope will continue. We are also very grateful to Japan, the United Arab Emirates, the United States of America, Australia and Kuwait for providing Iraq with human and humanitarian resources to alleviate the humanitarian suffering, particular that experienced by displaced persons in Iraq. The Government of Iraq also thanks all members of the international alliance and the European Union for all their help in combating terrorism. We welcome their military and logistical assistance in support of the operations of the Iraqi security forces. We thank the Security Council for its persistence in calling upon the international community to provide the necessary support to Iraq to combat Daesh and other armed non-State groups affiliated it.

We call on the countries of the region to agree to exert greater efforts and vigilance in combating the terrorist threat and ensuring that we can extirpate it. We reiterate terrorism can be effectively countered only if we are persistent and unified. States and international and regional organizations need to work together and towards the same ends. That is the only way we can effectively and efficiently tackle the terrorist scourge.

The efforts undertaken to tackle Daesh have been supported by the Iraqi army and police, as well as by members of the popular mobilization forces and the tribes. That is proof of the courage of the Iraqi people and their rejection of Daesh's occupation of their cities and villages. All of these people and groups have been mobilized to support the efforts of the the international forces that are already working hard to combat and to extirpate those terrorist groups. We are working to liberate Fallujah and Ramadi in a two-front. We believe that this is proof of the power of the anti-terrorism coalition.

Over the past few years, Iraq has made considerable progress in the promotion of women's rights by adopting various national strategies, policies and programmes of action to that end. As for the fight against violence against women, the promotion of women's rights and the appointment of women to senior posts in Government institutions, we have established a unit within the Ministry of Human Rights to monitor and follow up violations of the rights of women in Iraq. We have also rolled out a directorate for the promotion of women and women's rights, which works at the level of the Council of Ministers, and a number of gender-specific units within various ministries and institutions. Today women are seen as essential partners in the decision-making process and we have appointed women to key posts in State institutions. Women are also represented in the Iraqi Parliament and in various decision-making posts in ministries and State institutions.

Iraq faces challenges of great magnitude as a result of the ferocious attacks carried out by terrorist groups on major urban centres, markets, schools and hospitals. In other words, they target civilians, including women and children. The armed groups are also recruiting children, which we are working hard to prevent. It is a source of great concern. We are also working to address the underlying causes of child recruitment. The Iraqi penal and counter-terrorism codes lay out general rules and regulations for sanctioning and punishing anyone who recruits children as fighters or participants in criminal terrorist activities.

There have been very positive developments recently in the bilateral relations between Iraq and Kuwait, as demonstrated by high-level visits between both countries aimed at promoting and encouraging improved links between them. We are currently discussing the establishment of an emergency fund to support rebuilding and reconstruction in areas that have been liberated from Daesh. The fourth joint ministerial meeting between Iraq and Kuwait saw significant progress in our bilateral relationships, including the signing of memorandums of understanding promoting cooperation in the areas of security, maritime issues and trade links, all of which should have a very positive effect on political, economic and other links between us.

In the context of the importance we attach to implementing resolution 2107 (2013), particularly paragraph 4, which focuses on efforts to follow up on missing Kuwaiti nationals and property, we have set up various units within our Ministry for Human Rights aimed, where necessary, at finding the grave sites and exhuming the remains of Kuwaiti citizens. Our efforts have also been supported by international expertise. Iraq will continue to make every effort to provide support for finding such disappeared Kuwaiti nationals and to find witnesses who can provide us with credible information on their possible burial sites so we can exhume their remains. The Iraqi people understand that the relatives of those who have disappeared are suffering from not knowing the fate of their loved ones, so we continue to make every possible effort to discover the fate not only of Kuwaitis but also of the thousands of Iraqis who lost their lives under the former regime, in order to give their families closure.

Regarding the restitution of Kuwaiti property and the Kuwaiti national archives, every three months the Minister for Foreign Affairs has published announcements in various journals, newspapers and elsewhere in the press requesting information on missing Kuwaiti nationals and goods. We believe this to be a key humanitarian issue. We will pursue our efforts to develop the capacity to streamline and improve the process of searching for and investigating missing persons and property. We welcome the support of UNAMI in that regard and hope that it will continue to provide the technical support and cooperation necessary to improve Iraq's capacity in that area. Also, we are continuing to work with Kuwait and with specialized agencies of the United Nations to complete the mapping of the border.

It is crucial that we find a way to deal with events in Syria and end the carnage being endured by the Syrian people. We must do whatever we can to find a political solution that will satisfy the demands of all parties to the conflict while preserving the country's territorial integrity and unity, which can best be reached by establishing assurances of non-interference from outside Syria in its internal affairs. We must also do all we can to cut off the flow of foreign fighters into the country. We must find a solution that is fair to all Syrians and that will enable them to pursue a life of dignity in a democratic country, achieve national reconciliation and deal with the armed groups in the country. We believe that will have the added effect of improving our fight against terrorism in Iraq, since terrorism does not respect borders and can be found in every region and country in the world.

We welcome the agreement on nuclear capacity just signed in Vienna between the P-5+1 and Iran. Iraq is making every effort to support them, as we have been since they began working to find a peaceful solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, and we look forward to giving them our support in the future. Baghdad was one of the cities hosting meetings of the P-5+1 and Iran, because we were convinced of the importance of the meetings for peace and security in the region as a whole. The agreement is also another weapon in the arsenal that can help us to end all possibility of war in the region. We welcome the Council's unanimous adoption this week of resolution 2231 (2015) in support of the agreement and call for its implementation.

In conclusion, I would like to once again thank Mr. Ján Kubiš, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and his team for their tireless efforts to provide information and advice and to support displaced Iraqis, and for working with the UNAMI and

country teams to enable us to establish the capacity we need to implement our mandate.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.